

Adam Stephen to George Washington, December 9, 1755, with Report, Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers. Published by the Society of the Colonial Dames of America. Edited by Stanislaus Murray Hamilton.

FROM LIEUTENANT COLONEL ADAM STEPHEN.

FORT CUMBERLAND Decr. 9th. 1755

SIR,

Inclosed are the Returns of the State of the Regiment, and Beeves killed, and on hand.

I think it would be adviseable the Govn. of N Carlina, and Maryland should be acquainted with the Resolution of our Government, concerning the Provisions necessary for their Companies.

You only desired me to acquaint them, that they were not to be supply'd out of their Stock, Please to give me peremptor Orders to prevent it, and then Capt. Dagworthy will I suppose give them orders to be Supply'd from what they Call the Kings, though did he give that Order, I believe I should desire Mr McLean to serve all wt Kings Stores untill they were Exausted. The province we belong to Supply'd the Regiments wt the greatest Share of what was Used by them, when on this Quarter, and from that, I imagine we are as much intituled to a share of Fish and Butter as any Troops of an other Province, In the mean time, I want this affair managed with address, and let the Orders Come from the proper Source, that if their is any Odium in the Case, it may fall on the right place, and the officers

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be clear of it, Otherwise they are jealous enough, to think it proceeds from Us, being picked at their having the Command.¹

In short, I am Anxious untill this affair is Settled, and am Big with Jealousy, as well on our Own Acct. as of a Generous and Active Province, which I imagine to be Concerned in the Decision. I talked by the by, of Sending a Large Detachmt. over the Mountains, and an told Capt. Dagworthy should Say. No men Should leave this place without his Orders.

I intend to put things to a Tryal Shortly, because I think I might relieve all the Militia on the S Branch is Soldiers from your Regiment, had I your Orders, without being obliged to acquaint any person at this place. —

I believe there are goers between, who endeavour to Sow the seeds of Dissention, but all is harmony, and Ability hitherto.

There is a drunken impertinent fellow, Defever, come down to Winchester, Conductor of the Train, Who has the Care of the Kings Stores here, and I think is negligent—I wish you would order him to be taken up as Deserter, to scare the fellow; and reprimand him for coming down.

All the gentlemen here would receive a great pleasure from Seeing you at Fort Cumberland, as would

Sir Your most ObthubSert. ADAM STEPHEN

Cattle received in two Drovers630 from Virginia

Cattle Slaughtered of the above432 of Ditto

Cattle not killed—of ye above128 of Ditto

Cattle not killed of ye Carolina, A Drove &c Philadelphia

Present to the Army— 63 Head

FORT CUMBERLAND Dbr 8th 1755

Testes ALLAN McLEAN

1 The old difficulty about rank between the provincial officers and those with King's commissions had been revived at Fort Cumberland. Immediately after the affair of the Great Meadows, the Assembly of Maryland granted the small sum of six thousand pounds for the defence of the frontiers, and in the December following they passed an act authorizing the Governor to raise a military force. A few soldiers only were enlisted, and at this time a Maryland company of thirty men was stationed at Fort Cumberland, under the command of Captain Dagworthy, who had been an officer in the Canada expedition during the last war, and had received a King's commission. Governor Innes had gone home to North Carolina on his private affairs. Dagworthy assumed the command, and refused to obey any orders of a provincial officer, however high in rank. This created wranglings and insubordination among the inferior officers, who took sides. The Governor of Maryland was tardy in giving any decisive orders to Dagworthy, because the fort was in that province, and he seemed willing to consider it under his command. Governor Dinwiddie argued, that it was a King's fort, built by an order sent to him from the King, chiefly by forces in the King's pay, and that it could in no sense be regarded as subject to the authority of Maryland. And, moreover, as Captain Dagworthy had commuted his half-pay for a specific sum of money, his commission had thereby become obsolete, and there was no propriety in his pretending to act under it; and it was an absurdity for a captain with thirty men, who in reality had no other commission than that from the Governor of Maryland, to claim precedence of the commander-in-chief of all the Virginia forces. Colonel Washington refused to interfere, but made a forcible remonstrance to the Governor and Council at Williamsburg, and insisted on a speedy arrangement, that should put an end to the difficulty. To effect this purpose, Governor Dinwiddie sent an express to General Shirley, commander of His Majesty's forces in North America, stating the particulars of the case, and requesting from him brevet commissions for Colonel Washington, and the field-officers under him; proposing, at the same time, that these commissions should only imply rank, without giving any claim to pay from the King.—SPARKS.